Definitions of Terms Used in Proposed Rule 201.6 – Geographic Information Standards

albers equal area conic projection – a map projection developed by Albers in 1805 and commonly used in mapping of the United States by the U.S. Geological Survey. While some distortion is inherent in all map projections, a characteristic of the albers equal area conic projection is that scale distortion is minimized.

datum – a smooth mathematical surface that closely defines the mean sea-level surface of the earth throughout a certain geographic region of interest (such as North America). Accurate ground positional measurements must be made with reference to a specific datum appropriate to the region.

geographic information system (GIS) – a system of computer hardware, software and procedures used to store, analyze and display geospatial data and related tabular data in a geographic context to solve complex planning and management problems in a wide variety of applications.

geospatial data(set) – data which describes some aspect of the earth's surface (or near-surface regions), or which can be identified with a specific location on or near the earth's surface. A geospatial dataset employs a defined, earth-based coordinate system which allows its use in a geographic information system.

geospatial dataset enhancement – substantial alteration of a geospatial dataset which increases its usefulness through the addition of attribute (tabular) data fields, improvements in spatial accuracy, or extension of geographic coverage.

geospatial dataset maintenance – addition to, or alteration of, a geospatial dataset as part of a routine business process.

geospatial metadata – a description of the characteristics of a geospatial dataset, recorded in a standard format. Characteristics include data content, quality, purpose, condition, format, spatial coordinate system, availability, etc. The Federal Geographic Data Committee has defined a formal content standard for digital geospatial metadata for use by federal agencies.

geoTIFF – a TIFF-based image format for geo-referenced raster imagery.

JPEG – JPEG is a standardized image compression mechanism. JPEG stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group, the original name of the committee that wrote the standard.

lambert conformal conic projection – a map projection developed by Lambert in 1772 and commonly used in mapping of the United States by the U.S. Geological Survey. While some distortion is inherent in all map projections, a characteristic of the lambert conformal conic projection is that shape distortion is minimized.

GIS map product – a geographic representation, in paper or electronic format, displaying features from one or more digital geospatial datasets. Small scale images that are clearly intended only for graphic illustration within a larger publication are not considered to be GIS map products.

map projection – a systematic representation of all or part of a surface of a round body, especially the Earth, on a plane.

survey product – a map, report, letter, or other document produced by a registered professional land surveyor while engaged in the practice of land surveying.

TIFF – Tagged Image File Format. A public domain raster image file format.

world file – a file that accompanies a specific raster image file and that contains geo-referencing information that can be used by certain GIS software to correctly display the raster image in an earth-based coordinate system.